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URL

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Abbreviation of *Uniform Resource Locator*, the global address of documents and other resources on the World Wide Web.

The first part of the address indicates what protocol to use, and the second part specifies the IP address or the domain name where the resource is located.

For example, the two URLs below point to two different files at the domain *pcwebopedia.com*. The first specifies an executable file that should be fetched using the FTP protocol; the second specifies a Web page that should be fetched using the HTTP protocol:

- <ftp://www.pcwebopedia.com/stuff.exe>
- <http://www.pcwebopedia.com/index.html>

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LINKS

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Guide to URLs 🚀

Explains the basics of URLs including how they work, syntax, usage, construction, and various schemes for HTTP, FTP, gopher, electronic mail, Telnet, etc. Also includes links to URL related resources and RFCs.

A Guide to URLs

Provides a comprehensive guide to understanding Uniform Resource Locators (URL). Organized in a table of contents format, you can link to the section that interests you. In addition, the author has provided many Web links for additional information on this subject.

Document addressing - uniform resource term information

This World Wide Web Consortium page provides information on the uniform resource family of terms that deal with addressing documents on the Web. There is information on Uniform Resource Identifier (URI), Uniform Resource Locators (URL), Uniform Resource Names (URN), Uniform Resource Citations (URC), and how they all work together.

Domain.com

Domain name registration, Web hosting, e-mail services, domain search, and SEO services.

Internet Standards document on URLs

This Internet standards document specifies a Uniform Resource Locator (URL), the syntax and semantics of formalized information for location and access of resources via the Internet.

Naming and Addressing Overview

Contains overview materials related to addressing (URI, URL, URN, URC).

RFC 1738

Request for Comments document for Uniform Resource Locators (URL).

W3C addressing page

W3C's overview page on URL addressing. It contains links to news and events, NCSA's URL guide, a glossary of terms, information on addressing schemes, URL documents, specifications, drafts, and reports.

Yahoo!'s URL page

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Yahoo!'s directory of Uniform Resource Locators (URL).

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Search Dictionary:

UNIFORM RESOURCE LOCATOR

WordNet Dictionary

Definition: [n] the address of a web page on the world wide web

Synonyms: universal resource locator, URL

See Also: address, computer address

Computing Dictionary

Definition: (URL, previously "Universal") A standard way of specifying the location of an object, typically a web page, on the Internet. Other types of object are described below. URLs are the form of address used on the World-Wide Web. They are used in HTML documents to specify the target of a hyperlink which is often another HTML document (possibly stored on another computer).

Here are some example URLs:

<http://www.w3.org/default.html>
<http://www.acme.co.uk:8080/images/map.gif>
<http://www.foldoc.org/?Uniform+Resource+Locator>
<http://www.w3.org/default.html#Introduction>
<ftp://wuaarchive.wustl.edu/mirrors/msdos/graphics/gifkit.zip>
<ftp://spy:secret@ftp.acme.com/pub/topsecret/weapon.tgz>

mailto:fred@doc.ic.ac.uk
news:alt.hypertext
telnet://dra.com

The part before the first colon specifies the access scheme or protocol. Commonly implemented schemes include: ftp, http (World-Wide Web), gopher or WAIS. The "file" scheme should only be used to refer to a file on the same host. Other less commonly used schemes include news, telnet or mailto (e-mail).

The part after the colon is interpreted according to the access scheme. In general, two slashes after the colon introduce a hostname (host:port is also valid, or for FTP user:passwd@host or user@host). The port number is usually omitted and defaults to the standard port for the scheme, e.g. port 80 for HTTP.

For an HTTP or FTP URL the next part is a pathname which is usually related to the pathname of a file on the server. The file can contain any type of data but only certain types are interpreted directly by most browsers. These include HTML and images in gif or jpeg format. The file's type is given by a MIME type in the HTTP headers returned by the server, e.g. "text/html", "image/gif", and is usually also indicated by its filename extension. A file whose type is not recognised directly by the browser may be passed to an external "viewer" application, e.g. a sound player.

The last (optional) part of the URL may be a query string preceded by "?" or a "fragment identifier" preceded by "#". The latter indicates a particular position within the specified document.

Only alphanumerics, reserved characters (:/?#%+) used for their reserved purposes and "\$", "-", " ", " ", "&", "+", " " are safe and may be transmitted unencoded. Other characters are encoded as a "%" followed by two hexadecimal digits. Space may also be encoded as "+". Standard SGML "&" character entity encodings (e.g. "´") are also accepted when URLs are embedded in HTML. The terminating semicolon may be omitted if &is followed by a non-letter character.

The authoritative W3C URL specification.

See Also: name, World-Wide Web

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